Remarks

The Applicants have amended Claim 1 to recite that there is a line bisecting the cross section of monofilaments in the direction of the major axis of the cross section which is substantially straight. This can readily be seen by referring to the Applicants' Specification beginning on page 15 at line 18 and extending through line 1 of page 16. This also can be seen by reference to Fig. 1 of the Applicants' drawings. The new language also flows naturally from the earlier language of Claim 1, which recites the cross section of monofilaments being selected from the group consisting of a flattened cross section of constant thickness having round edges, a flattened cross section of substantially constant thickness having grooves at each side of a major axis and having round edges, and combinations thereof. Entry into the Official File and consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

The Applicants note with appreciation the withdrawal of the earlier rejection based on Fastenau '047.

The Applicants note the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over JP '740. In that regard, the Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's detailed comments hypothetically applying JP '740 to the claims. However, the Applicants respectfully submit that JP '740 fails to teach or suggest the subject matter as recited in Claims 1 and 2 for the reasons set forth below in detail.

It is advantageous to use a base fabric having high fabric density for non-coated air bags in comparison to coated air bags. To have such a high density fabric with good productivity, it is known to provide high entanglement to material fiber. For example, "High entanglement can be obtained." is described in paragraph [0036] of JP '740.

Moreover, for example, US 5,657,798 shows that it is important for a yarn to have (i) a mean opening length of 2 to 10 cm (Column 4, lines 31 to 65), (ii) stability of intermingling point (Column 5, lines 28 to 40) and (iii) stability of intermingling points during or after tensioning (Column 5, lines 57 to 62) to obtain good productivity of the machine. That is, JP '740 and US '798 teach that fibers having many residual entanglements are suitable for non-coated air bags since the fabrics made of those fibers have many entanglements.

In spite of this knowledge, the number of residual entanglements in the warp yarns in the Applicants' claims is less than the prior art. One skilled in the art would not think of this inventive concept about entanglement. The number of residual entanglements in the warp yarns influences air permeability, particularly air permeability at seams. The skilled artisan would not think of this inventive concept either based on JP '740.

According to The Applicants' Comparative Example 7, many residual entanglements cause poor air permeability. It cannot attain air permeability of a fabric at the seam of less than 30 $cc/cm^2/sec$. Therefore, the Applicants could not obtain superior non-coated air bags having compactly foldability in the housing space and far higher air permeability than that of JP '740 in the Comparative Example. In sharp contrast, the claimed subject matter is overwhelmingly superior to JP '740 in foldability and air permeability because it has fewer residual entanglements.

According to Comparative Examples 4, 5 and 6 when the surface degree of flatness or horizontal index is out of the claimed range, air permeability at seams becomes worse and the Applicants cannot obtain a base fabric for high-pressure inflatable, non-coated air bags.

That is, a base fabric as claimed herein is far more superior to that of JP '740 on the points of much higher air permeability and much higher pressure inflatability. The claimed base

fabric having such a superior quality must satisfy all requisites of Claim 1. The skilled artisan would not think of this specific combination based on JP '740. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that JP '740 is typical of the prior art as illustrated by US '798 with respect to a high degree of entanglement. The Applicants went in a completely different direction, namely an opposite direction, and limited the number of residual entanglements in the warp yarn so that they are less than the residual entanglements taught by the prior art. The result is seen in the air permeability and higher pressure inflatability. As a consequence, the Applicants respectfully submit that JP '740 leads those skilled in the art away from the Applicants' claimed subject matter. Leading those skilled in the art in a direction that is completely different from what the prior art teaches is among the most compelling evidence of non-obviousness. The Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the solicited claims are not obvious over JP '740 and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

The Applicants note the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Fastenau '017. The Applicants also note with appreciation the Examiner's helpful comments hypothetically applying Fastenau '017 to the rejected claims.

However, the Applicants respectfully submit that Fastenau is very, very different, as can be seen with respect to a line bisecting the cross section of the filaments in the direction of the major axis. The Applicants specifically claim a line bisecting the cross section of the monofilaments in the direction of the major axis of the cross section being substantially straight. As noted above, this is readily seen by reference to the Applicants' Fig. 1.

This is sharply contrasted to Fastenau '017, wherein the cross section is sinusoidal. Accordingly, a line bisecting the cross section of monofilaments in the direction of the major axis of the cross section of the sinusoidal Fastenau '017 monofilaments is not substantially

straight. That bisecting line is also sinusoidal. There can therefore be no doubt that the subject matter of Fastenau '017 is completely different from the Applicants' claimed subject matter. Moreover, there are utterly no teachings or suggestions in Fastenau '017 to make modifications to change the bisecting line from a sine wave to a substantially straight line. In fact, just the opposite is true with respect to Fastenau '017 since its fundamental essence is sinusoidal cross-sectional monofilaments. Changing away from that fundamental premise would destroy the essence of Fastenau '017 and one skilled in the art surely would not do that.

The Applicants therefore respectfully submit that Fastenau '017 completely fails to disclose, teach or suggest the Applicants' specifically claimed aspect of the line bisecting the cross section of monofilaments in the direction of the major axis of the cross section be substantially straight. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire Application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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